

OATH-TAKING AS A SCIENCE.

To the Editor of the Evening Telegraph.

PERDITION no longer has any terror for the evil-doer. Oath-taking—swearing before God, with the uplifted hand, on the sacred Bible—has lost its sanctity. Law for the punishment of him who perjures himself has lost its influence and is now but a phantom—a mere shadow which melts away like the snow of autumn. He who deserves to fill the felon's cell rules his gang with an iron hand, and bids the peace-loving citizen and the law-defiance. He is conscious of his strength whenever he desires to use it, and walks the streets the best-dressed man in town. The murderer, or would-be assassin, if he be numbered among the "rings" which govern as politically, no longer fears the hangman's noose. Ignorance and knavery no longer quail and give way before learning and integrity, but stalk boldly forth and stare honestly out of countenance. Honesty, sobriety, and intelligence are no longer a requisite in office getting or office holding. Dishonesty, chicanery, and lying beat down modesty and ability, and trample them like worms beneath their feet. Conscience is a thing of the past, perjury a thing of the present, and men practice it as though it were as honorable as it is lucrative. Oath-taking has become a science, and he who can swear best and hardest is the most successful professor. Look on either side, among nearly every trade and calling where money-getting is the chief aim, and you will find those who live by their wits sailing along smoothly, while honest labor is still tugging away in the traces. The one appears as happy as the other. With the first, the science of oath-taking has been mastered, and thousands who are witness to his success devote their time and attention to it, with all the avidity that the learned alchemist will devote to a newly discovered mineral. Dodges are invented, plans laid, money spent with a lavish hand, the laws are gone over and dissected, and all with a view to cover up or make right a dishonest and dishonorable action, whereby money shall be placed in the pockets of the who best mastered his lessons. Lying can no longer be called wrong, or if it can, it is not, for lying is now the order of the day. He who lies well is proportionately successful; he who hoodwinks and lulls into repose those who are around him by his cleverness in the art, and then seizes the advantages, is called "smart" or "sharp"; you take either term—one is as appropriate as the other; and that the successful practitioner shall have earned for himself the title of "sharp" is not all; no, if that were all, we should know where to lay hands upon our man; but society does not stop at giving him that which is but another name for roguery, but takes hold of him and embraces him in her arms and bids him go forth to greater deeds in the same line. He has lost nothing in the social scale. On the contrary, he is a half fellow well met, and hands that would scorn to do a mean action clasp his, and all because they would rather have his friendship than his enmity. And why? Fear at the power which he sways with relentless hand, evidently outside of the law, compels you to make the best terms you can. But lying is not good in law. There it is that those who do not see the practical workings of the law are blinded. Lying is good in law, as any lawyer can testify, and, where it is sworn to by the professional oath-taker, is far better than the truth for all practical purposes, in nine cases out of ten.

There are times, let us be thankful, when the oath-taker's vocation is lost; but that is only in such cases as the public attention has been called to, and those who use the professional are fearful of losing what little respectability they may possess by having the eyes of their neighbors riveted upon them. It is in the petty cases, in which the public is not interested, that the science of oath-taking is most observed and most skillfully used. How many villains, whose proper place is within the stone walls of a prison, are daily let loose to prey upon the community by our present system of administering some of our laws, none can ever know save those who have daily business in the courts, or are familiar with the haunts of the corrupt and vile.

As an instance wherein the science of oath-taking comes out in colors least inviting, we take the liberty of citing a case which may still be fresh in the minds of those who are interested in such matters. Some years ago, a man who had been well known as a bounty-jumper, substitute dealer, and general thief, but who always managed to cover up his tracks so that it was impossible to obtain direct proof of his guilt, found his occupation gone by the collapse of the Rebellion. The police had had an eye on the gentleman for a long time, but as he became more settled, they hoped he had reformed. And so he had: he reformed as a thief and became an incendiary. He bought out a small grocery store in the lower part of the city, fitted it up in good style, had it insured for a good round sum, and then set about making a speculation. Having saturated everything with coal oil and other inflammable material, he looked up his store as usual, and started on a journey out of the city. Soon after he had left, a police officer noticed smoke issuing from the chimneys in the shutters, and suspecting that something was wrong, broke down the door and found the arrangements pretty much as we have described them. Of course the man was arrested and put in prison. The insurance companies as well as the officers of the law determined to make an example of the party, and would probably have done so had not the scientific oath-taker, aided by a pettifogging lawyer, stepped in and defeated the ends of justice. The way it was done was this:—The man had been committed to prison in default of heavy bail, and the authorities were lulled in their vigilance by the knowledge that the man had no friends to interest themselves in his behalf. In that they were somewhat mistaken. Cormorants exist among the lawyers, and one of these waited on the culprit in his cell, and proposed to get him bail for a certain sum. The offer was accepted, the money paid, and the bail-

goer produced before another judge who knew nothing whatever of the case. The case was represented to the judge as being a trifling one of arson; and in course of time the bail-goer was put through the usual course of questioning, and swore that he was worth so much money, owned property of such a description in such a location, and, over and above everything, was worth sufficient to become bail in the case in hand. He was accepted, the man was liberated from prison, and immediately left for Canada. Of course, the bail was forfeited, and all that remained to be done was to sue it out. This task was commenced, when lo! it was discovered that, although the property was there, just as had been stated, yet the title was in dispute among a half-dozen parties, but in which the name of the bail-goer did not occur at all. The given residence of the man was visited, and discovered to be an unfinished house, whereon the mechanics were still employed. Both bail and culprit were gone; what was to be done? Just nothing, and there the matter rests to this day. We could cite a score of cases similar to the above, but the one is sufficient to convey to the reader some idea of how men get out of prison, when there is ample proof of their guilt, and are never heard of after. The case of Jimmy Haggerty, so fresh in the mind of the public, is but another instance wherein the scientific oath-taker has played a prominent part, but thus far, thank fortune! unavailingly.

Those who have had business before any of our city aldermen, and who have stopped to witness some of the cases which claim the attention of those gentlemen every day, cannot but have noticed the wide difference (to use no stronger term) which exists between the statements of two people, each claiming to be perfectly familiar with the case. Mr. A. swears pointedly that such a thing was so and so. B. comes upon the stand, and swears it was exactly the reverse—in fact, contradicts A's statement in toto. Now it may be that neither A. nor B. are intentional perjurers, yet one or the other has done so in making oath to his statement. It may be, in fact we have seen it, where a half dozen witnesses in the same case will swear each other are the greatest liars that ever lived or are likely to live, should the world continue forever. Now some of these witnesses must know that what they aver is incorrect, and should be corrected by an application of law, not so much to punish them as to show them that if they have no fear of the world to come they are at least open to correction in this. We cannot call them scientific oath-takers, as we apply the term; for their sympathies, and not money, frequently carry them beyond reflection, and yet something should be done in the premises. The present course is to listen to all sides, select what you please from the many statements, and decide the case to your liking. Having said thus much of two kinds of oath-takers, we now come to another and still more dangerous class. They are last, but far from being least.

When one reads in the newspapers of the appointment or election of a man to office, we are inclined to think that that man has something about him so far beyond his fellow-men in point of honesty and efficiency, that when we come to look at the man as he really is, the bright picture painted by our imagination floats suddenly away, leaving, as it were, nothing but a festering, putrid mass of matter, too disgusting to be near, and too dangerous for the business man to openly avoid. There are honest, upright, well-meaning, and industrious men in office. Far be it from our intention to malign those who seek to do right, and whose taste or education leads them into public life. There are good men even among the politicians, some of whom would as quickly turn from a mean, dishonorable action as they would from the embrace of the loathsome, slimy snake. It is not of these men that we are speaking, but of those whom the records of time and the public will point at as being the men who have sworn to do the duties of their office, and perjured themselves for pecuniary and political gain. As we notice the frequency of these occurrences, as they turn up in our courts (not more than one in ten are ever touched upon by the law, and are therefore only known by a few), and then observe the placid countenance, oily tongue, and the fawning mannerisms of the men who perjure themselves with as little compunction as they would sip their liquor, we wonder what can be the education of the man or the condition of the mind that would execute so black and damning a deed. Yet these are the men who, in many cases, have filled the offices of our city, and who ask a re-election, putting forward as their chief claims upon the party and the suffrages of the people the fact that they have learned the science of oath-taking, and are therefore doubly competent. Nor is this an idle statement. No! would that it were, for then it is likely that we should forget. No! the proof is here beneath our very eyes. If curiosity would tempt you, take up the records of our past Legislatures. Look about you, and see and hear some of the men who ask that you shall place them over you as your rulers; and then, should you still desire more, visit the courts, and inquire of him who is not afraid to speak the truth (if such a man can be found), and we doubt not but that all the evidence you can ask for will be submitted to you.

But no man need trouble himself to hunt up the scientific oath-takers. The newspapers of the past few weeks have been rife with incidents of this character, which come crowding upon you whether you desire it or not. First we have an Alderman, a man who has sworn most solemnly that he will preserve the peace and enforce the laws, who, in his official capacity, publicly declares that he will be the means of riot and bloodshed; who dares the people to execute the laws that he has sworn to defend. And that is not all. Eject that man from the office he now holds, and his "pals" will elect him to another. With him and his, the voice of the people,

the ballot, is as nothing further than the use it can be put to, to forward his own ends and those of his friends. Nor is he alone; others, without his boldness, will, perhaps, do what he threatens, and thus the scientific oath-taker does as he pleases and makes money by daring to do it. The case we have here cited is of such a character as does not occur every day, but there are others that do that are equally as bad. A few days since THE TELEGRAPH published an account of how the inspector of coal oil was to do his duty, and yet did not do it. Now it may be that this man did not swear that he would faithfully execute the duties of his office, for we know of cases where oaths have been avoided, or taken in such a manner as the oath-taker did not consider binding; but that does not alter the case. His duty was to see certain laws executed. If he did not attend to his duty, he was just as guilty of a wrong as though he had taken an oath. If we would see the judicial ermine dragged in the dirt, we have but to glance at New York city, and there we have it in the person of a judge who treats criminals as boon companions, and empties the prison cells of their worst characters. He, as well as countless others who hold office, are scientific oath-takers, and the country looks on in bewildered wonderment, and seeks to know when the abuse is to be corrected.

Let us have a law. The fear of future punishment has lost its influence, and the oath-taker looks upon the Bible as upon a book of fables. If we would have more rogues punished, let us have more stringent laws; and where it is known that a man has perjured himself in ever so slight a degree, let his punishment be such as to forever prevent him and deter others from attempting. Let it be dealt out to high and low alike—to all, no matter what or where his station may be, and then, and not till then, will oath-taking as a scientific calling be abandoned.

EXCITING.

Hunt After an Escaped Bengal Tiger at Glen's Falls.

French Mountain, between Glen's Falls, N. Y., and Lake George, was the scene of a genuine sensation during the sojourn of Campbell's Circus and Menagerie at that village last week. At a late hour one night, long after the audience had been dismissed and the canvas pulled down, the watchman left in charge observed a large animal cart across his path and almost instantly vanish in the darkness. Suspecting at once that some one or more of the wild beasts had escaped from their bondage, he hastened to where the cages were corralled, and discovered that the largest of the two elephants had drawn the stake to which he had been fastened and had upset the cage of the Bengal tiger, breaking the doors and bending the bars in such a manner as to allow the animal to escape.

To run to the hotel, awaken the elephant-driver, and summon all hands, was the work of a moment. The elephant was promptly fettered, and a search for the traitor tiger commenced. The scene was one of indescribable excitement. None but two of the most resolute of the showmen would lead in the search, the remainder following at a respectful distance, and in the greatest trepidation. The tiger was not long in being known his whereabouts for the hunting a calf, in pain and terror, indicated that his royal highness was satiating his gluttonous appetite on live veal. The leading spirits of the hunt approached, and by the aid of their torches, discovered that the tiger had stricken down a yearling heifer, and was crouched over the dying animal, greedily lapping the blood which spurted from a large wound in its neck.

A plan for capture was soon devised, and Mr. Clem King, the keeper of the tiger, at once set about putting it in practice. He procured a rope, and making a noose in the form of a latist, he ascended by a ladder from the outside of the shed to a window, from whence he passed to the rafters immediately over the tiger. He then gave a loud shout, which caused the tiger to look upward, giving Mr. King an opportunity to throw a larriat over the animal's head, which feat he executed with admirable accuracy. Drawing his rope taut, he made it fast to a beam, and another rope was passed to him, with which he succeeded in lassoing the tiger in the same manner as before. Mr. King then threw the end of one rope to a party of men near the entrance to the shed, and when they had secured it, he threw the end of the other rope to another party, and the two lines were at once stretched, each party walking in an opposite direction. When the tiger would make a rush at one group of his captors, the others would hold their line, and thus prevent him from doing any mischief. After much exertion, and several ludicrous stampedes from the bystanders, he was dragged back to the cage, which had in the meantime been repaired. When he came in view of his den he bounded in with a yell, and, in a moment, he had his hasty to secure him, closed the iron door so suddenly, and severed about a foot of His Majesty's tail.—Troy Times.

OFFICIAL CORRUPTIONS.

The Case of Collector Steadman.

From Albany Evening Journal (Republican), Sept. 21. The vague and unsubstantial rumors of official corruption, involving the parties at New Orleans, have taken definite form. General Steadman, Collector of that port under Johnson, is charged with defalcations aggregating the enormous sum of \$400,000. Though previous hints have been given that the General was not entirely scrupulous and upright, this allegation of tremendous and wholesale villainy will be received by the public with surprise and pain. The case affords material for reflection upon the close alliance between perfidy to principle in the abstract and personal iniquity. General Steadman made a brilliant record during the war; his close few men stood higher or had father prospects of elevation. In an evil hour he was induced by his former Democratic associates to unite in their scheme for sustaining the perfidious Johnson against Congress. The President sent him to New Orleans as a spy upon Sheridan. For his despicable services in that capacity, he was appointed to succeed the hero of the Shenandoah in command of the department and proffered the Secretaryship of War. Neither of these places suited him, for a reason now apparent—they were not sufficiently profitable. He was then made Collector, and it is now said that during his brief career in that place he plundered the people of more than half a million dollars. What a record to supplement the glorious achievements he had made as a soldier! Probably the robberies of Steadman were perpetrated in co-operation with the whiskey ring. His associations in that direction were notoriously bad while he was in office. At last to get off for Cuba in command of a filibustering expedition. It would be well for him could he meet death upon some battle-field in a manly effort to secure liberty for an oppressed people.

LEGAL NOTICES.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. MARY PRENOT, Respondent, vs. HENRI PRENOT, Plaintiff. March Term, 1869, No. 22. In Divorce. To HENRI PRENOT, Respondent, please take notice that the Court have granted a rule on you to show cause why a divorce a vinculo matrimonii should not be decreed in the above cause, returnable on SATURDAY, October 9, 1869, at 10 A. M. Personal service of this notice is acknowledged by R. DAVIS PAGE, Attorney for Libellant. 9 22 24 27 30 10

EMPIRE SLATE MANTEL WORKS.—J. B. KIMES, No. 212 CHESTNUT Street. 11 23 24

EDUCATIONAL.

RUGBY ACADEMY FOR BOYS, No. 115 LOCUST Street. EDWARD CLARENCE SMITH, A. M., Principal. Young men prepared for positions of high standing in College. Circulars at No. 123 CHESTNUT Street. Next session begins September 15th. 117 2m 1

\$150 A YEAR FOR BOYS OR GIRLS AT Schools, BERLIN, N. J. REV. T. M. REILLY. JAMES PEARCE, M. B., ORGANIST ST. Mark's (No. 1430 SPRUCE Street) will continue his professional duties on OCTOBER 1. 9 20 m 11

H. D. GREGORY, A. M., WILL REOPEN HIS CLASSICAL AND ENGLISH SCHOOL, No. 110 MARKET Street, on MONDAY, Sept. 6. 8 25 1m 2

THE MISSES GREGORY WILL REOPEN THEIR SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LADIES, No. 201 LOCUST Street, on MONDAY, September 13. 8 30 1m 2

MISS BONNEY and MISS DILLAYE WILL REOPEN their BOARDING and DAY SCHOOL (Fourth year), Sept. 15, at No. 1616 CHESTNUT Street. Particulars from Circulars. 8 15 7 2

MISS BURNHAM'S SCHOOL FOR YOUNG Ladies opens September 20. Personal interview can be had, after September 6, at No. 1616 Filbert Street. For Circulars apply to F. E. GOURLAY, Esq., No. 615 WALNUT Street. 9 20 1m 2

MISS JENNIE T. BECK, TEACHER OF Piano, will resume her duties September 6, at No. 746 FLORIDA Street, between Eleventh and Twelfth Streets. 9 12 m 2

GERMANTOWN ACADEMY, ESTABLISHED 1792.—English, Classical, and Scientific School for Boys. Boarding and Day Pupils. Session begins MONDAY, September 6. For circulars apply to G. V. MAYS, A. M., Principal, Germantown, Philadelphia. 8 3 24 1m 2

WEST CHESTNUT STREET INSTITUTE.—Miss E. T. BROWN desires to announce that she will open on TUESDAY, September 21, at No. 405 CHESTNUT Street, West Philadelphia, the new location of her English, Classical, and Scientific School. Circulars at Mr. Warburton's, No. 430 Chestnut at 9 15 1m 2

SINGING ACADEMY, No. 813 ARCH Street, Second Story Front.—The undersigned having secured the above central location, is engaged in fitting it up for class instruction in the Rudiments of Singing, Vocalization, Glee, and Musical Singing. Full particulars in a few days. Private Lessons usual. 8 15 7 2

A. R. TAYLOR, No. 1207 FILBERT Street. THE EDGEHILL SCHOOL, A Boarding and Day School for Boys, will begin its next session in the new Academy Building at MERRIMANTVILLE, NEW JERSEY, on MONDAY, September 6, 1869. For circulars apply to Rev. E. W. GATTELL, 628 1/2 Principal. 8 28 1m 2

H. Y. LAUDERBACH'S CLASSICAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND COMMERCIAL ACADEMY, ASABURY, THOROUGH PREPARATION FOR BUSINESS OR COLLEGE. Special attention given to Practical Mathematics, Surveying, Civil Engineering, etc. A First-class Primary Department. Circulars at Mr. Warburton's, No. 430 Chestnut at 9 15 1m 2

ACADEMY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, FOUNDED A. D. 1783. S. W. COE, LACOSTE and JUNIPER Streets. The Rev. JAMES W. ROBINS, A. M., Head Master. With Ten Assistant Teachers. From September 1, 1869, the price of Tuition will be NINETY DOLLARS per annum, for all Classes; payable half yearly in advance. French, German, Drawing, and Natural Philosophy are taught without extra charge. By order of the Trustees, GEORGE W. HUNTER, Treasurer. 8 16 m 1 1/2

The Session will open on MONDAY, September 6. Applications for admission may be made during the preceding week, between 10 and 12 o'clock in the morning. JAMES W. ROBINS, Head Master. 8 16 m 1 1/2

"THE HILL" SELECT FAMILY BOARDING SCHOOL, An English, Classical, Mathematical, Scientific and Commercial Institution, FOR YOUNG MEN AND BOYS. A First-class Primary Department. The First Term of the Nineteenth Annual Session will commence on WEDNESDAY, the 8th day of September next. Pupils received at any time. For Circulars address REV. GEORGE F. MILLER, A. M., Principal. 8 16 m 1 1/2

REV. DRS.—Meigs, Schaeffer, Egan, Kranth, Seis, Mullenberg, Stever, Hunter, Store, Conrad, Bomberger, Wyle, Sterry, Marple, Crumshank, etc. HONS.—Judge Handlow, Leonard Myers, M. Russell, John Killinger, etc. ESQs.—James E. Caldwell, James L. Claghorn, C. S. Grove, T. C. Wood, Charles B. Thomsen, G. Bogge, C. F. Norton, L. L. Houtz, S. Green Fry, Miller & Dent, Charles Wannemacher, James, Kent, Santos & Co., etc. 8 16 m 1 1/2

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